

Inspection of Upperby Primary School

Uldale Road, Upperby, Carlisle, Cumbria CA2 4JT

Inspection dates: 15 and 16 November 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Early years provision	Good
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Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement
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What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy in school and feel safe. They are polite, courteous and friendly. Staff deal with any cases of bullying effectively. Pupils know right from wrong. Most are respectful and tolerant of those who may be different from themselves.

Pupils enjoy taking part in cultural and adventurous activities in the local area and further afield. They look forward to visits to outdoor education centres and cities, such as Edinburgh, where they can stay overnight. These build character and support pupils in learning about life in wider British society.

Pupils look after one another. Older pupils take responsibility for younger pupils through being playground buddies. Pupils have an active school council. All pupils are able to participate in this through an electronic voting system. This helps them learn about democracy and citizenship.

Parents and carers of children in the early years typically commented on how well children settle into school. They said that staff are very caring and approachable.

Leaders and teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Lessons are rarely disrupted. This is because most pupils are keen to learn.

Pupils know that teachers expect them to try hard and do their very best work. Leaders make sure that pupils who sometimes find learning difficult, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), receive effective support. Most pupils, as well as children in the early years, achieve well.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The school has improved considerably since the last inspection. Leaders have revised the curriculum, ensuring that it is organised in a logical way. Leaders and teachers are ambitious for all pupils. As a result of a well-designed and well-taught curriculum, pupils in key stages 1 and 2 are developing an increasingly secure body of subject knowledge.

Children in the early years also have a well-structured curriculum. For example, it builds on their knowledge of the world around them to prepare them well for key stage 1 geography, history and science. Teachers provide opportunities for children to learn to count and to compare numbers and sizes. This means that most children are ready to study the mathematics curriculum in key stage 1.

Teachers have good subject knowledge. They are also skilled in providing support to meet the needs of all learners, including those with SEND. They make good use of the range of training opportunities available to improve their teaching of the curriculum. Teachers use assessment strategies effectively to check that pupils know and remember more.

Despite the strengths in the curriculum, in a few subjects older pupils in key stage 2 have some gaps in their knowledge. For example, in geography, pupils struggled to learn to use six-figure grid references because they did not have enough prior knowledge of maps. This is because leaders' improvements to the curriculum are relatively recent. Older pupils have not benefited from them in previous year groups.

Adults join in well with children's imaginative play in the early years. Occasionally, they miss out on opportunities to encourage children to extend the range of words that they know and understand.

Leaders have prioritised reading throughout the school. Staff teach the phonics curriculum consistently well from the beginning of the Reception Year. Skilled staff help pupils to practise their reading, from books that they carefully select to match pupils' phonics knowledge. Teachers read to pupils frequently, sharing their own enthusiasms for books and authors. They encourage pupils to read for pleasure at home as well as in school. Most pupils enjoy reading from a range of texts. Most of them become fluent and accurate readers as they move up the school.

Leaders and teachers identify the needs of pupils with SEND accurately and at the earliest possible stage. They enable these pupils to study the same curriculum as their peers. This means that pupils, including those with SEND, succeed, and most are ready for the next stage in their education.

Pupils usually behave well. They rarely disturb the learning of others. Most pupils attend regularly and on time. Classrooms are calm and well organised.

Leaders have provided opportunities for pupils to develop their skills and knowledge beyond the academic curriculum. Pupils participate in events and competitions, such as the city music festival. Leaders held a 'careers fair', where representatives from a wide range of trades and professions visited the school to talk to pupils about their work. A recent sports week enabled pupils to try out a range of different sports, including archery, gymnastics and fencing. These opportunities help pupils to learn about the wider world and prepare them well for the future.

Governors know the school well and fulfil all their statutory responsibilities. They talk to pupils about their learning and meet with subject leaders to find out about improvements to the curriculum. Governors and leaders consider staff's workload and work-life balance when making decisions. Staff feel valued by leaders and governors.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and governors ensure that all staff know how to keep pupils safe. Staff and governors receive regular and up-to-date training, including in child protection and first aid. This helps them to know when a pupil may be at risk of harm. Leaders

respond to any concerns and make sure that pupils and families receive effective support.

The curriculum helps pupils learn about how to manage risks and keep themselves safe outside of school. For example, they learn about how to be safe online. Pupils said they know that they are safe because the school grounds and buildings are secure and staff are always watching out for them.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Historic weaknesses in the curriculum for some foundation subjects mean that older pupils in key stage 2 have gaps in their knowledge and understanding. Leaders should ensure that the revised curriculum is fully implemented in all year groups so that pupils systematically learn the specific knowledge and skills they need in all subjects.
- Staff in the early years do not take up enough opportunities to develop children's communication and language skills when they are learning through play in the continuous provision. Leaders should ensure that all staff are skilled in recognising opportunities to intervene in children's play activities and able to support them in broadening their vocabulary and extending their thinking.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	112243
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	10241201
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	390
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	William Atkinson
Acting headteacher	Paula Burns
Website	www.upperbyschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	13 May 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The acting headteacher took up her role in January 2022.
- The acting deputy headteacher is seconded from another local school.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the second routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- During this inspection, the inspectors met with the acting headteacher, the acting deputy headteacher, subject leaders and seven members of the governing body.
- The inspectors met with a representative of the local authority.

- The inspectors reviewed a range of safeguarding documentation, including the single central record of checks on staff's suitability to work with pupils. The inspectors met with the designated safeguarding lead and checked how leaders record and respond to any safeguarding concerns.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, geography and religious education. For each deep dive, the inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspectors also looked at pupils' work in some other subjects.
- The inspectors observed pupils reading to a familiar adult and spoke to pupils informally at breaktimes.
- The inspectors spoke with staff about their workload and well-being.
- The inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. The inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Jan Corlett, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Chris Metcalfe	Ofsted Inspector
David Lobodzinski	Ofsted Inspector

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